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Social Media and Body Issues in Young Adults:

An Empirical Study on the influence of Instagram use on Body Image and
Fatphobia in Catalan University Students

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Course: 2016/17

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Abstract

Body Image dissatisfaction and fatphobia are two concerns that are becoming increasingly prominent in today's generation. Previous research has demonstrated a viable link between media exposure and an increased level of body image-related concerns. New media, most notably social media, has introduced a new form of mediated rhetoric that needs to be accounted. Social media applications such as the image-based platform known as Instagram allows for immediate access to a plethora of idealized body images. According to statistics, the age group of 16-24 are the most active Instagram users. This research proposal aims to conduct an empirical investigation on the relationship between Social Media focusing on Instagram use with body image dissatisfaction and fat phobia on Catalan undergraduate students. It is a 3 step experimental research study with a sample of (n=200) male and female participants. Three scales have been chosen to retrieve the data: Sociocultural Attitude towards Appearance Questionnaire-3 (SATAQ-3; Thompson et al., 2004), Body Image Disturbance Questionnaire (BIDQ; Cash et al., 2004) and Fat phobia scale (Bacon et al., 2001) and Instagram Use-related questions.

Keywords: Body Image, Fatphobia, Social Media, Media Exposure, Instagram

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1. Introduction

It has been reported that approximately 91% of women are dissatisfied with their bodies and roughly 80.7% of men talk in an anxious prone way about their bodies (Robertson, 2015; Campbell, 2012). Distortions in body image and fatphobia are two issues that are becoming increasingly prominent in today's youth. Both the male and female population are being subjected to influencers that might increase levels of body image dissatisfaction and fatphobia. A meta-analysis examining 77 correlational and experimental research studies suggests that exposure to mass media portraying versions of idealized bodies is a link to the increase of body-related issues in women (Grabe et al., 2008). Two other meta-analyses examining 25 studies also revealed that pressure from media was significantly related to men having skewed perceptions about their own bodies (Barlett et al., 2008). Such attitudes often result in a lowered self-esteem and negative behaviour such as chronic body monitoring, eating disorders and excessive exercising in women and men respectively (Ferguson and Winegard, 2011; Bartlett et al., 2008). A recent statistic suggests there are 700 million users on the image-based social platform Instagram (Constone, 2017) where an estimate of 80 million images have been reported to be uploaded per day (Ratcliff, 2016). Taking into consideration social media as a primary contributor to media consumption, we can begin to realize the potential ramifications of this social problem for current and future generations.

Body image describes how a person evaluates his or her appearance. It is described as a set of beliefs and attitudes one holds about their own body, mostly but not strictly its appearance (Cash et al., 2004). According to Leon Festinger (1954) humans have a drive to measure themselves, opinions and status by comparing themselves to other individuals. This is known as the social comparison theory (Friedman, 2000). The way this relates to body image dissatisfaction is through upward social comparison which is when people compare themselves to those they believe are better than themselves (Lewallen & Behm-Morawitz, 2016). This self-evaluation process has been highly linked to outside influences such as the mass media exposure e.g

Cultivation Theory (Shanahan and Morgan, 1999) and societal standards (Van Vonderen and Kinnally, 2012). Media outlets, be it traditional or new, share a large amount of unrealistic images of idealized bodies which might trigger upward social comparison in many people thus resulting in an increase in body image dissatisfaction (Lewallen & Behm-Morawitz, 2016).

Another phenomena that is affected by the presence of media is fatphobia. Fatphobia is described as an attitude comprising of a general dislike, fear and intolerance towards fatness (Robinson et al., 1993). The stigma surrounding fatness results into weight biases which in turn manifests itself in opportunity inequity because 'fat' people are often considered lazy, unattractive and weak (Gailey, 2016). There hasn't been a substantial amount of literature covering the link between media and fatphobia, however, it seems fairly plausible that the marginalization of other body types while reinforcing unrealistic body ideals would result in negative attitudes towards fatness. Anti-fat attitude has been observed to be based on ideology and more noticeable among men. A research surveying over 1000 undergraduates found that antifat attitudes were positively correlated with authoritarianism, implying that prejudice against fat people may be another manifestation of a collection of political and social attitudes (Crandall & Biernat, 2006).

Media exposure has been well documented as a variable linking to an increase in body image dissatisfaction. Previous research (Yamamiya et al, 2005) recognized that media exposure to thin-and-beautiful media images affects women body image and mood states negatively. The same is to be said about men who have been recorded to become significantly more depressed with higher levels of muscle dissatisfaction after being exposed to ideal male images (Agliata & Tantleff-Dunn, 2004). A recent study attributed the influx of body dissatisfaction to the rise of 'bedroom culture' and social media (Wagner et al., 2016). The term bedroom culture is described as a set of performative practices and identity representation induced from the confines of the bedroom, especially administered by young people in modern society (Devereux, 2011). Millennials, i.e the current generation, are becoming increasingly invested in the virtual world and forming an idealized online persona which they can present to the world as an extension of themselves (Gonzales and Hancock, 2011).

There is a large amount of research that has found a positive correlational relationship between media exposure and increase body image dissatisfaction. Most researches, however, oversee the impact of traditional media outlets such as television or magazines (e.g Engeln–Maddox, 2005). The induction of social media into people’s daily lives signifies a new form of meditation which needs to be accounted for (Lawellen & Behm-Morawitz, 2016) . The use of hashtags is often employed to give an image virality and more exposure e.g #thinspiration, #fitsperation, #bodygoals and #noexcuses (See Appendix B 1.1). Fitsperation imagery is described as images of fit models meant to inspire and motivate, however, a study examining this phenomenon found that exposure to fitsperation might have negative unintended consequences (Tiggemann and Zaccardo, 2016). Hashtags allows the images to be accessed by anyone at any given time and place. There are two new research studies completed by the same author that incorporate social media use (Instagram and Facebook) as a focal variable on body image related issues (Fardouly et al., 2017, Fardouly et al., 2015). Those two studies will serve as the main references that will guide the framework of the proposed study.

While the mentioned works incorporate social media use into the research, it has restricted the demographic to the female population. The number of literature covering the impact of idealized body images on women is disproportional to that of men. It is equally significant to understand the effects repetitive media exposure of hypermasculine ideals has on on the male demographic especially considering that muscle dysmorphia (bigorexia) among men is believed to be increasing (Ahmad et al., 2015) and the use of anabolic steroids as a way to gain muscle has been reported to be on the rise as well and used by up to one million people in the UK (Oppenheim, 2015).

It is also important to note that most researches performed on the relationship between media and body image has been mostly confined to the American demographic with an emphasis on Caucasian women (Botta, 2000). African American women are less likely to be affected by media images and experience body perception dissatisfaction because (a) the majority of female

body images in the media are different from themselves and (b) their standards of an ideal body shape are different than those suggested by the media. A study (Warren et al., 2005) suggest that some ethnicities serve as a protective factor against internalization of a thin ideal and body dissatisfaction. Further research have to incorporate a wider demographic to allow for cross cultural comparison to better understand the impact of media on different ethnic backgrounds.

This research proposal aims to fill some of the aforementioned empirical gaps. The objective of the research is to investigate the relationship of social media use (Instagram) on body image and fatphobia in male and female Catalan undergraduates. A 3 step experimental method will be employed where three scales will be used Sociocultural Attitude towards Appearance Questionnaire-3 (SATAQ-3; Thompson et al., 2004) , Body Image Disturbance Questionnaire (BIDQ; Cash et al., 2004) and Fat phobia scale (Bacon et al., 2001) on a sample of (n=200) male and female participants. Investigating this impact on Catalan undergraduates will allow for cross cultural comparison and data obtained from the male demographic in the research will put into context the effects of this mediation.

An expansion of the mentioned theories and framework will be presented in the next chapter.

2. State of the art

Literature Review

In this section, we will explore the key concepts defining the research study. We begin with definition and explanations of body image, fatphobia and social media.

The theoretical framework that motivates the hypotheses of the research is based on psychological and communication theories such as Social Comparison, Social Learning and Cultivation Theory. Those theories will be used to explain the relevance of media exposure and tendencies of social behavior when it comes to body image perception. A closer look at body ideals, i.e thin and muscular ideals perpetuated through media, celebrity worship and the fashion industry, will allow us to see the role such idealized exposure and consumption plays.

Finally, we review related empirical research e.g., Fardouly et al. (2017), Fardouly et al. (2015) for contemporary social media reference, (Botta, 2000) for demographic differences and three meta-analyses (Ferguson & Winegard, 2011; Barlett et al., 2008) will be used to further elaborate on possible gender differences.

Key Concepts

2.1 Body Image

Body Image is defined as a set of self-evaluation assessments one pertains to the physical appearance of their body (Cash, 2004). There are several factors that contribute in the making of body-image perception which if administered in an ill-advised manner may lead to distortions and disorders (Thompson & Heinberg, 1999). Media is often regarded as a main contributor to dominant standard of body ideals which means it has power to generate healthy body-positive messages as well as negative ones.

The term was first introduced by Austrian neurologist and psychoanalyst Paul Schilder (1935) and since then has been a great interest of many communication and research scholars. There is a great amount of research and journals dedicated to body image as well as over 50 scales

developed to assist researchers and clinicians to properly measure body image related concerns (Thompson, 2004).

The factors constructing dominant body image views are psychological and sociocultural in nature. Parental influence and comments produced by peers and loved ones greatly influence how a person will view his or her body. Early pubertal maturation, trauma inducing events like sexual abuse and negative emotionality might also generate negative body perception tendencies. Media has been reported to play a significant role in the acceptance and construction of body standards. Feminist scholars have referred to the diverse range of media outlets from advertisements, fashion magazines, television series and films to inducing a pervasive and uncompromising standard of ultra-thin body ideal (Thompson, 2004). The generation of message through mass media to a wide and anonymous audience has often been linked with the intent of profit maximization (Thompson, 2004).

The thin-ideal, to be explained in detail in the following segment, is a media discourse that is often pushed by repetitive images upholding impossible body standards. Those images often portray women with a slender frame where most of the models usually weigh below what is considered a healthy Body Mass Index (BMI). The images are then subjected to electronic manipulation which include photoshopping, retouching, editing, filters and airbrushing (Botta, 1999). The dilemma that arises, as a result, is that those images are often pushed as realistic standards to adopt when in fact it is close to impossible to achieve that body form without subjecting the body itself to unhealthy and unsustainable conditions (Engeln-Maddox, 2005). An estimate of 1.6 million people in the UK are affected by an eating disorder where 14-25 year olds are the most affected.

It is not only women who are affected by the dominance of idealized images. Men are also subjected to media pressure to which some turn to the use of harmful substances such as steroids and performance-enhancing drugs in order to achieve the desired body. Anabolic steroid use among men has been on the rise where up to one million people have been reported to using steroids in the UK (Oppenheim, 2015). Needle-exchange clinics have claimed a 50% increase in

the last 3 years alone (Mulrooney & Van de Ven; 2016). Anabolic steroid acts as a catalyst agent that mimics testosterone stimulating above natural muscle growth. The substance is often combined with gym training and workouts to produce defined outlines around the muscles. This exchange may be linked to the domineering muscle-ideal perpetuated in mainstream media (Olivardia, 2001). Similar to the thin-ideal, the muscle-ideal is another manufactured construct which idealizes one body while stigmatizing others. That body type is often of a well-defined chest, enlarged muscles and arms and an overall Hulk-like appeal.

We conclude to three main elements to consider when dealing with body image. First is the content and power of media discourse where reproduction of unrealistic ideal body images dominant the media sphere be it traditional or new media. Second is the internalization of this ideal which is often adopted by receivers of the mediated message. Finally, it is considering the harmful actions that arise as a result of this internalization. Those actions include chronic body monitoring, excessive exercising and engagement in unhealthy eating habits. This is all susceptible to change, however, by realizing the power of media and redirecting towards message with more body-positive message (Thompson, 2004).

2.2 Fat phobia

Fatphobia is described as a general reactionary standpoint entailing a form of dislike, fear and intolerance towards fatness (Robinson et al., 1993). There are several social, cultural and even economic factors that pose as influencers to the fat stigma. A major contributor to the increase of fat phobia is the underrepresentation and marginalization of fat and fat people in various media outlets such as films, television series and video games (Greenberg et al., 2003). Antifat attitudes can easily detected in society as it manifests unequal opportunities and the harbouring of hostile environment towards fat people. The environment might include the normalizing of humor at the expense of fat people i.e fat joke and fat shaming (Braziel and LeBesco, 2001).

Perceptions of fatness framed by economic, historic and economic factors built a fear around fat thus successful vilifying the abstract notion.

“ In postmodern capitalist patriarchy such as the United states fat is seen as something repulsive, funny, ugly, unclean, obscene and above all something to lose”(Braziel and LeBesco 2001: 2). Radical Fat activists have argued our viewpoint regarding fatness is unnatural, moreover this marginalization serves historical and cultural positioning. Infact, a survey examining 1000 undergraduate found a positive link between antifat biases and levels of agreeableness to authoritarianism implying that the prejudice may be a result of a socio-cultural manifestation (Crandall & Biernat, 2006).

Weight biases prevail in various daily life functionalities. While society is slowing recognizing the repercussions of offensive jokes that are perhaps racist or sexist in nature, jokes that use fatness as the punch line are still spread (across social media) and are normalized. While some discriminatory behaviour such as sexism or racism are more prone to condemnation, obese people are the most openly stigmatized members in society (Tomiyama & Mann, 2013). GAP's new ad campaign is the perfect exemplification of this. It succeeds at being racially inclusive by featuring 15 models of different ethnicity background (See Appendix 3.1), however, all the models were thin further demonstrating the apparent and obvious lack of body or size diversity in mainstream media (Feldman, 2017). Weight-based discrimination is one the most prevailing forms of discrimination. Words often associated with fat are lazy, ugly and sick (Tomiyama & Mann, 2013). As a result of this stigmatization, these individuals might lose out to many life opportunities as jobs and promotions.

A new age notion that includes the prevalence of social media and weight bias is fat-shaming. Fat-shaming is the act of condemning a person due to their body shape and size (Gunnars, 2016,). An explanation as to why some feel the urge to shame others about their bodies is because fat people violate the Western thinness norm (Eller, 2014). Social media is often employed to distribute fat-shaming content where even the biggest celebrities can not escape the grasps of the weight-bias. Mega star Rihanna has been the most recent victim of fat-shaming attacks (Leaper, 2017). Other famous celebrities such as Adele, Lady Gaga and Selena Gomez

were also victims on the receiving end of online body criticism after being called names such as 'fat cow' and 'female hippo'(CNN, 2015).

Scientific research has confirmed that fat-shaming an individual often leads to a lowered self-esteem and may cause psychological harm (Guannars, 2016,). A case involving fat-shaming through social media took a serious turn and ended up in court earlier this year (2017). A fat-shaming victim sued a playboy model after the model posted a naked picture of the victim in the shower of the gym with the caption 'If I can not unsee this, neither can you.' The victim sued the model on counts of privacy-invasion and has stated that she was left humiliated by the ordeal. The following statement was issued by the victim's lawyer, "Body shaming is inhumane. And it tears down the victim's self-respect. It has devastating consequences. It stigmatizes victims.",(Miller,2017). A manner to combat this form of negative criticism was through the use of #theysaid where fat shaming victims would share their stories and experiences (Vagianos, 2017).

A recent fatphobia related controversy is quite unfortunate as the target audience of the media product is children. The newly released animated film Red Shoes and the 7 Dwarfs(2017) depicts a parody version of Snow White as someone who is no longer beautiful and has 'let herself go'. By that, it was decided to animate Snow White as a fat girl thus equating her look with an unpleasant appeal and something to be avoided further perpetuating the fat stigma (See Appendix B 3.2). The film concludes with the seven dwarfs learning to love Snow White in spite of her physique. This appearance-focused message, even though seemingly positive, still focuses on body image as focal point of value. The animated feature has received considerable backlash from concerned parents for their spreading of body shaming fatphobic messages (Scott, 2017).

This form of loaded language only serves to escalate intolerance of the social phenomena. It increases stigma and stereotypes surrounding fat people thus increasing levels of fatphobia and antifat attitudes. According to a recent study published by the Journal of Obesity, such weight-based criticism is not a source of healthy encouragement and often damages self-esteem

(DiGiuliot, 2017). All of the fatphobia-related media events listed above transpired earlier this year making this research proposal relevant to our times.

2.3 Social Media (Social Networks Sites)

Social Network Sites (SNS) are online spaces that provides the user with a wide arrange of services that cater to customized interests (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). The user has the ability to generate an online identity, build relationships as well as create and share content (Kietzmann et al., 2011). This technologically mediated world has changed how communities interact with one another, how companies and corporations interact with the public and finally how the public interacts with major companies and corporations (Kietzmann et al., 2011).

The mediation of images and ideology has seen a progressive incline throughout history.

Beginning with the newspaper, television and now the most popular source for information is social network sites. Social media has officially been dubbed the new television making it the primary provider of media consumption and exposure (Abrahamson, 2017). Just like the how the invention of television revolutionized daily life in the early 1920s (,), the introduction of social media has had a similar revolutionizing effect on contemporary culture. The allure of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagrams has garnered billions of daily active users (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

The induction of social media to human life is fairly new. It earliest forms can be traced back to only 20 years ago with Six Degrees websites in 1997 (Hale, 2015). It most notably took rise with the popularization of Facebook in 2004 (Nicholas, 2010). Seeing as it how fairly recent this innovation is, in depth research concerning its effects on human mannerisms and interaction is still underworks.

The age of Instagram

Instagram is a solely image-based social network site (Instagram, 2017). There are currently 700 million active users on Instagram (Constine, 2017) and an estimate of 80 million images have been reported to be uploaded per day (Ratcliff, 2016). It is reasonable to note that the younger

generation is more prone to use modern technological as means of communication. Statistics has shown that the age group of 16-26 is found to be most active on Instagram (Appleton, 2017)

Image content usually shared on Instagram range from personal to promotional narratives. It is necessary to take into account the emerging language that arises as a result of interaction among the online community. Studies have reported on the rise of ‘bedroom culture‘ that relates to social media (Wagner et al, 2016). Bedroom culture is described as the exchange of content shared by users to represent an online identity to their fellow peer. It is most commonly popular among young people in society (Eoin Devereux ,2007) . Millennials are becoming increasingly invested in forming an idealized online self which they can present to the world as an extension of themselves (Gonzales and Hancock, 2011).

Hashtags and Virality

The exponential growth of technological advancements signifies a change in the way the public uses modern day devices. The new generation is being introduced to the cyber world at a relatively younger age. Approximately 85% of young teens will have access to smartphones by the age of 14 onwards (Lenhart, 2009) which means young boys and girls will be more likely to have access to images of idealized body on at a young age and a frequent basis. Body image and perception is pivotal during those formative years, if not introduced in a healthy fashion might result in warped sense of reality.

A few years ago, a popular trend and hashtag under the name Thigh Gap ‘#thighgap’ found it’s way into social media outlets (See Appendix 1.2). Thigh Gap is a reference to the space between the inner thighs of a woman. The idea behind this notion is that a woman’s thighs should not be touching when she has her feet placed closed together standing up and that space in between her thighs is called the thigh gap. The beauty trend that swept across social media prompted specialized ‘thigh gap’ diets and workout exercises. The trend pertains the ‘thigh gap’ as something highly favorable in a female body which in turn has not only been accepted and internalized by young females but also adopted by young males as a desirable standard of beauty

(Swash, 2013). Talented and world renowned singer Demi Lovato who has also been affected by online weight bias recently took to Instagram to address this issue. Lovato who has 56.2 million followers proclaimed through her account that she is still beautiful even though she doesn't have a #thighgap (Instagram, 2017). This is indicative of how important body appearance is in online communities.

Other hashtags often used in association with body images include 'thinspiration', 'fitspiration', 'thinspo' and 'fitspo'. The hashtags can also be found on other social media platforms such as Pinterest (Lewallen & Behm-Morawitz, 2016). The troubles that cascade from the use of hashtags is the directness towards the intended audience and the number of people those images are reaching. That is to say, individual using this platform are more likely to view those images at any given time and place thus increasing their media exposure to hyper idealized body images.

The rise of Instagram Models

Social media gave rise to a new prototype of models known as Instagram Models. Instagram Models are not necessarily affiliated to a specific agency but are usually paid to promote certain products on their personal accounts.

Female Instagram models are known to adhere to the same thin-ideal perpetuated by the fashion industry. Famous Spanish Instagram Model Sita Abellan (See Appendix B 2.1) has over 264 000 followers which may be considered minimal when compared to successful celebrity model Kendall Jenner who has gathered around 78.2 million Instagram followers (Instagram, 2017). Male fitness models are also gaining popularity and are widely celebrated on Instagram (See Appendix.B 2.2). There are hundreds of accounts that adhere to exposing idealized male body image. An example is the account handle name of 'JustFitGuys' with over 300,000 followers. True to it's name, the account shares content of only fit men further perpetuating the muscular ideal while simultaneously marginalizing other body sizes.

The rise of Instagram Models (male and female) is important to consider because most of the models adhere to the ultra-thin or muscular body ideals. The accounts engage with millions of followers where a large portion of active Instagram users are adolescents and young adults (Statistica, 2017). Social media allows users to feel a more personalized connection to the celebrities and figures they follow as they chose to like, share and comment thus engaging in a more interactive setting as opposed to simply viewing the images.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Psychological and Communication Theories

Social Comparison Theory

Social comparison theory is a significant core element in understanding the presence and measures taken when it comes to individual self-evaluation therefore social comparison theory becomes a crucial player in relating the relevance of contemporary media and body ideals. Many new and old research studies have called up this theory to explain the possible relations.

The term first appeared in 1954 coined by social psychologist Leon Festinger who described social comparison theory as an attempt to understand opinion influence processes in social groups. Festinger hypothesized that in a typical human organism exists a need or a drive to evaluate his/her opinions and abilities (Festinger, 1954). He maintained that opinions and abilities, even though seemingly differ, have a conjoining relationship in the sense that when put together influence overall behaviour and attitude. That is, a person's belief about the existing situation he/she finds himself is added to the evaluation of what he/she believes is capable of doing results in his/her behavior.

His second hypothesis introduces the value of an outside player. It declares that generally people derive a sense of self-comprehension by evaluating their abilities and opinions by respectively comparing it to others (Festinger, 1954). Festinger explains that one can not always extract meaning by reference to the physical world which is why people seek others and their opinions and abilities to test for adequacy and validation

This concept of self-evaluation and appraisal gained notability within the realm of research as a basis and focus of self-enhancement. Next was the introduction of the notion of downwards and upwards social comparisons. The theory behind downwards comparisons is that an individual can improve morale or self-esteem by making comparisons with other individuals who are believed to be less-fortunate (Wills, 1981). Likewise upwards comparisons would entail a decrease in self-esteem when engaging in comparisons with individuals who are believed to be of better stature (Gibbons, 1986).

Upward Social Comparison theory is theory used to explain the increase in body-image related distortions. Existing research has suggest that upwards social comparison and the dominance of thin-ideal in contemporary society and mainstream media results in negative attitudes and practices among women (Engeln–Maddox, 2005). The sections which follows will give a closer examination of thin and body ideals.

It appears that individuals will engage in comparative practices with the images they are exposed to. As it is ,most of the images perpetrated by the media consist of hyper-idealized bodies. That is to say, most of the images are often retouched and manufactured to an unrealistic measure which explains why people will associate negative feelings when comparing their own body as they are comparing it to an unattainable standard.

Social Learning Theory

Many theories offer insight to the inner workings of individuals. Social theorists like Albert Bandura (1977) provide stepping stone in understanding mundane functions of the human mind. He introduced the Social Learning theory which has been describe to a draw a bridge between behaviorist and cognitive learning. This theory will also serve in explaining human responses to the impact of mass media.

Social learning theory describes the development of new behaviours as a result of a set of successive patterns obtained through experiences or through observing others (Bandura, 1977).

Cognitive learning provides further explanations on personal acts of imitation, reflection and the potential influential role of mass media (Bandura, 2001). Media provides a widespread form of discourse equating a particular look -the thin and muscle ideal- to physical perfection which in turn serves as a status symbol. The dominance of this unrealistic body standard becomes a form of conditioning discourse that molds people perception and evaluation of physical beauty (Van Vonderen and Kinally, 2012).

Cultivation Theory and Media Exposure

When aiming to critically review the role of new media, it is imperative to understand the fundamentals of Cultivation Theory. This theory will first allow us to understand the role of television in construction of realities and from there we may begin to understand the potential impact of social media and influence repetitive media exposure on modern reality.

Cultivation Theory was introduced by George Gerbner and Larry Gross in 1976 as a result of several research-based studies surrounding Cultural Indicators. It describes the long-term effect of television exposure as cultivating viewers reality. The hypothesis posits that long duration of television watching becomes suggestive where viewers may begin to adopt views and narratives that are being administered to them. As simple as the theory appears to be, it underwent severe criticism and tests creating division among Communication Scholar (Shanahan and Morgan, 1999).

In a critical review of Cultivation Theory, academics of Cambridge University James Shanahan and Michael Morgan outline what is and what is not Cultivation Theory. Cultivation Theory is not the ability of a commercial to make viewers buy a specific product nor does it describe the centive allowing voters support a specific candidate. Cultivation Theory is about the pervasive nature of exposure to a repetitive pattern of images and ideologies exposed on television over a period of time (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999).

Extending the hypothesis from television watching to social media use allows to explore the possible effects of this new medium. Social media like television enables image-based

mediation. Some platforms like Instagram are solely image-based where Facebook has a wider set of possibilities. This meditation of images may sometimes carry out a specific ideology. When examining the numerous fashion, modeling and fitness handles offered on Instagram, specific body ideals and ideologies becomes evident. While ultra-thin models and hyperfit men are celebrated, other body types are marginalized and underrepresented.

Applying the Cultivation theory to this incentive will lead to the following conclusion. Repetitive media exposure of hyper idealized body images will persuade the viewer to accept and adopt this measurement as a normalized body standard.

2.2.2 Body Ideals and the Industry

There is a recurring pattern of body representation in media outlets. From films and series to advertisements and promotions, there is a bombardment of hyper-idealized body imagery of men and women alike (Botta, 1999; Olivardia, 2001). For women, it is often a fantasization of the thin-ideal and slender frame while for men it is the exposition of the muscle-ideal and chiseled look. Such appeals do not represent a realistic norm of society and often results in negative attitudes and perception.

Thin-Ideal

The thin-ideal is a concept which can be seen as an extension relying from objectification theory (Fitzsimmons-Craft et al., 2011). Objectification theory posits an outlook of the female body as an object to be looked and gazed at. As a consequence of that, many women and young girls internalize this notion and begin viewing themselves through this perspective. The thin-ideal becomes the ultimate manifestation of the desired body (Mckinley, 2001). The construction of the thin-ideal has been reinforced through popular sitcoms, television shows and magazines alike all succeeded at perpetuating one replica of the considerably thin idealized body free from any imperfections. Indeed, thinness is often rewarded and often overrepresented in mainstream media where normal and overweight are drastically underrepresented (Grabe et al, 2008). Most images of women in popular health and beauty magazine reinforce unrealistic idealized standards of body ideal with the aid of airbrushing and camera-angle techniques (Botta, 1999).

In an attempt to measure the validity of this relationship, Renee Engeln–Maddox- a psychologist and body image researcher at Northwestern University- underwent a study with (n=202) undergraduate females. The research aimed to test the ‘cognitive processing of print advertisements featuring images of highly attractive female models’ (Renee Engeln–Maddox, 2005). It underwent two phases where the participants were asked to share their thoughts regarding three advertisements issued from women’s magazines then the participants were asked to complete a self-assessing body image measure. The correlation matrix illustrated a positive relationship between viewing idealized body images and a decrease in body satisfaction that is women frequently compare their own bodies to the bodies of thin women, even though such comparisons might be damaging to their self-image(Engeln-Maddox, 2005).

Muscle-ideal

The glorification of muscles as the main attribute defining a man is heavily depicted in films and media (Hargreaves and Tiggemann, 2009;Olivardia, 2001). Actors have been reported to undergo strenuous exercise and excessive feeding to strip the body of any fat in order to portray the role of a superhero or action man in a film (Gross, 2016). This muscle idealization is repeated through many Fitness and Body-building accounts on Instagram. Internalization of such views among men often leads to distorted body perception and possible muscle dysmorphia. Muscle dysmorphia is described as the exaggerated sense of being displeased with one's body believing it is too small (Olivardia, 2001).

It has been hypothesized that the physiques of male action toys play a role body image distortion. In an attempt to verify this notion, prototypes of action figure toys over the span of 30 years were collected and measured. It was apparent that the circumference of the waist, chest, and bicep was increasing throughout the years and is believed to exceed even the largest of body builder in proportion size (Pope et al., 1999). Muscle dysmorphia is often referred to as "reverse anorexia" or bigorxia. It has been estimated that one in 10 men at the gym suffer bigorexia with reason to the believe the the number is on the rise (Ahmad et al., 2015). Just like anorexia, bigorxia retrain serious and dangerous habit that often include chronic body monitoring, over exercising and anabolic steroid use which can have dangerous side effects (Mosley,2009). Chair of the Body

Dysmorphic Disorder Foundation believes that many cases of bigoerxia go unnoticed and undiagnosed because there is little to no awareness of the subject matter (Ahmad et al., 2015).

Fashion Industry and Celebrity Worship

The fashion industry is notorious for placing immense pressure on models to maintain a ultra-slim physique even if that may include unhealthy habits such as calorie counting. Outrage grew the past few years when a few models like Brazilian model Ana Reston collapsed and unfortunately died after a long battle with anorexia. Reports suggested it was pressure from the fashion and modeling industry that led Ana to become a size 2 -a waist the same size as a typical seven-year-old's body (Phillips, 2007).

Indeed, images of women and models in media today are thinner and unnatural than ever (Grabe et al., 2008). When addressing the implications of media on body issues, it is imperative to address the standard set by fashion industry. The pretense which equates considerably thin models to beauty is an agenda that has been long pushed by the fashion industry for decades and adopted by celebrities alike. A study (Maltby et al., 2005) argues that a form of celebrity worship succeeds at fully engaging the viewer through an 'Absorption—Addiction' model by which an individual reaches great self satisfaction by emulating their favorite celebrity. Since most celebrities adhere to the industry's body standards , it is likely that their fans would want look like them.

2.3 Related Research

The correlational relationship between media and general bodily concerns has been a topic of great interest among scholars spanning several decades. School of Psychology researcher Jasmine Fardouly along with fellow peers dedicated a few scholarly papers seeking to quantify said relationship with most of the findings supporting the argument relating media exposure to generalized body dissatisfaction within the female population.

There are two very recent studies (Fardouly et al., 2017, Fardouly et al., 2015) that incorporate social media use in research on body image related issues (Fardouly et al., 2017, Fardouly et al., 2015). The first investigates Instagram use on young women's body image concerns and self-objectification (Fardouly et al., 2017) whereas the second looks for to the impact of Facebook on young women's body image concerns and mood(Fardouly et al., 2015). The methodology and logical premise committed in these works will inspire the guideline of the research proposal.

1. Instagram use and young women's body image concerns and self-objectification (2017)

The study examined the effect of Instagram use on body image concerns and self-objectification among women between the ages of 18 and 25 from the United States (n=203) and from Australia (n=73). It aimed to test for the internalization of the societal beauty ideal, appearance comparison tendency in general and appearance comparisons on Instagram (Fardouly et al., 2017).

After recruiting (N=276) female participants through online means, the participants were asked to complete an online questionnaire which had several scales. Three questions were asked to measure Instagram related usage:

a)- "How often do you check Instagram (even if you are logged on all day)?"

(1=not at all, 2=every few days, 3=once a day, 4=every few hours, 5=every hour, 6=every 30 minutes, 7=every 10 minutes, 8=every 5 minutes), and

b)- "Overall, how long do you spend on Instagram on a typical day?"

(1=5minutes or less, 2=15 minutes, 3=30minutes, 4=1 hour, 5=2 hours, 6=3 hours, 7=4 hours, 8=5 hours, 9=6 hours, 10=7 hours, 11=8 hours, 12=9 hours, 13=10 hours or more).

c- How often they viewed fitspiration images on Instagram?

(1=never, 5=every time I use Instagram; range=1–5).

Several scales were used such as the Self-Objectification Questionnaire (SOQ; Noll and Fredrickson, 1998), Eating Disorder Inventory (EDI; Garner et al., 1983), Upward and Downward Appearance Comparison Scale (O'Brien et al., 2009) and Internalization-General subscale of the Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire–3 (SATAQ-3; Thompson et al., 2004) and the Drive for Thinness subscale.

The results showed that the participants would check their Instagram between once a day and once every few hours. Overall, Instagram usage was positively correlated with self-objectification, internalization of the beauty ideal but not with body dissatisfaction or drive for thinness. The results do suggest that Instagram usage may negatively influence women's appearance-related concerns and beliefs.

2. The impact of Facebook on young women's body image concerns and mood(2015)

The study aimed to investigate the effect of Facebook usage on body image and mood in women. It was a two part experimental research where a sample of (n=112) female participants were randomly assigned to spend 10 minutes browsing through their own Facebook account (n =38), a magazine website (n = 36) , or an appearance-neutral control website (n = 38). Secondly, the participants were requested to complete an assessment that measures of mood, body dissatisfaction, and appearance discrepancies scales. The scales used included Self-Discrepancy Index (SDI; Dittmar, Beattie, & Friese, 1996; Halliwell & Dittmar, 2006), Upward and Downward Appearance Comparison Scale (UPACS/DACS; O'Brien et al., 2009) and computer based visual analog scales (VAS).

The research found that women reported being in a more negative mood after brief exposure to Facebook than after exposure to an appearance-neutral website, and that for women who are high in appearance comparison tendency, spending time on Facebook lead to greater face, hair and

skin-related discrepancies. The finding that exposure to Facebook induced a more negative mood in young women is consistent with previous research showing that brief exposure to Facebook led to more negative mood for both men and women (Sagioglou & Greitemeyer, 2014; Fardouly et al., 2015).

3- Meta-Analysis

In the section, we will discuss two meta-analyses conducted to examine the role media plays on body image concerns of female and male participants.

a)Meta-Analysis Conducted Among Females

In a fairly recent study (Grabe et al., 2008) a sample of 77 experimental and correlational studies were examined investigating the link between media exposure and body dissatisfaction, internalization of the thin ideal and eating behaviors among women. While some studies have found positive links between the mentioned variables, others studies concluded in null findings (e.g., Ferguson, Munoz, Contreras, & Velasquez, in press; Martin & Kennedy, 1993; Thornton & Maurice, 1997) or even more so one study found the presentation of media ideals to decrease body dissatisfaction(e.g., Cusumano & Thompson, 1997).

Half of the girls and undergraduate female student population reported experiencing negative feelings towards their body in the U.S (Grabe et al., 2008). Such associations develop at a relatively young age as young as 7 years old (Dohnt and Tiggemann, 2006). These negative attitudes towards one's own body often result in side effects that include body monitoring, excessive dieting and a lowered self-esteem. In some case, those feelings might escalate to more serious health concerns such as anorexia or bulimia (Grabe et al., 2008).

As stated previously, mainstream media is dominated by the thin-ideal which often marginalizes other possible body types (Anschutz et al., 2011). This under-representation of body types makes it difficult for girls and young women to relate and feel validated.

The fact that such media exposure creates impact worthy of serious mental and health issues makes it an essential topic to tackle. While some studies present a positive relation between other, others had null findings (Grabe et al., 2008). The meta-analysis grouped 77 studies in order to achieve a form of consistency. The sampling method included using PsycINFO and the Web of Science among other tools where a measure of mixed-effect sizes assumed the effect size variance. The results of the systemic meta-analysis concluded that in both correlational and experimental studies provide a strong agreement of the notion that media exposure of unrealistic idealized bodies has a profound effect of women's perception of their own body.

“We can see that media exposure appears to be related to women's body image negatively regardless of assessment technique, individual difference variables, media type, age, or other idiosyncratic study characteristics” (Grabe et al. 2008: 471).

b) Meta-Analyses Conducted Among Males

A study (Bartlett et al., 2008) conducted two meta-analyses to investigate the relationship of mass media exposure more precisely depictions of muscular ideals and the level of influence it has on men's body satisfaction, body esteem, and self-esteem. A total sum of 25 research studies were examined.

The study introduces of an interesting form of reverse logical deduction in it's review. It mentions the objectifying use of women's bodies in beer commercials (Harris, Cady, & Barlett, 2007) and explains that in order to be desired by such women men have to conform to a macho-like ideal. The male body type often portrayed in advertisements, films and media is often of a muscular build with wide shoulders, well-developed chest and arms (Furnham, Badmin, & Sneade, 2002; Bartlett et al., 2008). Representative examples of such ideals are Jean-Claude van Damme, Sylvester Stallone (Pope, Phillips, & Olivardia, 2000).

Like women, men engage in comparative practices with those idealized body images. As a result, unhealthy measures are taken such as excessive exercising. Individuals often fail to reach the

proposed standard seeing as to how unrealistic it is which increase the probable development of negative self-image (Ricciardelli & McCabe, 2004; Barlett et al., 2008). Such attitudes have a damaging impact on one's self-esteem, body satisfaction, and body esteem (Barlett, Harris, Smith, & Bonds-Raacke, 2005; Barlett et al., 2008).

To better understand the terms used, we will provide brief descriptions for them.

Self-esteem is described as a general assessment of the self as a whole (Rosenberg, 1965; Barlett et al., 2008). Body satisfaction is defined by what one thinks of their own body (Baranowski, Jorga, Djordjevic, Marinkovic, & Hetherington, 2003; Barlett et al., 2008) whereas body esteem describe how one feels about their own body (Franzoi & Herzog, 1986; Barlett et al., 2008).

4- Demographic differences

Up to a certain moment in time, most researches conducted only recruited a specific demographic of participants. Studies relating media to body image dissatisfaction for example only focused on European Americans. The efforts of feminists such as Susan Bordo (1993), Kim Chernin (1981), and Susie Orbach (1978) encouraged a more inclusive approach of different cultural and economic background for such studies (Botta, 1999).

a)-The mirror of television: a comparison of black and white adolescents' body image

An attempt to quantify possible demographic differences gathered a sample of (n=145) White and (n=33) Black females to test the theoretical framework of social comparison theory within regards to media exposure and upholding of body ideals (Botta, 1999). The participants were asked to fill out a survey measuring Body Mass Index (BMI), ethnicity and media exposure as in how many hours a week do they spend watching television and more significantly programs where thin-ideals are upheld. A likert scale was employed as an indication of frequency. For example, participants were questioned how much (from never = 1 to always = 5), when watching television do they make comparisons to media images among other question. This was done in an attempt to predict level of body image dissatisfaction as well endorsement of thin-ideal.

Results showed that overall Black girls watch more television than White girls however there is not a great difference in how much the girls compare idealized images. Other tests showed that the level of proneness to eating disorders in the group of Black and White girls that did not engage in a lot of television watch was similar. In contrast, the group of Black and White girls that watch a great deal of television, results showed that White girls more likely to engage in unhealthy eating habits and disorders. The interaction of race and viewing thin television dramas was a significant negative predictor of behaviors (Botta, 1999).

b)-Ethnicity as a protective factor against internalization of a thin ideal and body dissatisfaction

A study aimed at exploring ethnicity as a moderator against the internationalization of a thin ideal and body dissatisfaction gathered Spanish ($n = 100$), Mexican American ($n = 100$), and European American ($n = 100$) female participants (Warren et al., 2005). The participants were asked to answer a set of measures of sociocultural attitudes and body dissatisfaction. Results showed that proneness to thin ideal internalization and body dissatisfaction is much more significant among European American women than for Mexican American or Spanish women.

3. Research Study

A recent statistic expected an estimate of 700 million users on the image-based social platform Instagram (Constine, 2017). According to recent findings, 37% of those social media users are between the ages of 16-24 (Appleton, 2017). There is seemingly abundant amount of images circulating this online sphere- 80 million images to be exact(Ratcliff, 2016). The problem lies when those a large some of those images adhere to thin, muscular and unrealistic body ideals. Published along with those images are hashtags such as thinspiration, fitspiration and thigh gap which are used to further push this virality of the idealized body therefore increasing media exposure to viewers. Many previous researches (Ferguson et al., 2011) have found a positive correlation between traditional media consumption and negative perception towards body image. Furthermore it has been established that for girls in the study by Peterson et al. (2007), the power of media exposure and pressure was even larger than that for pressure from peers and mothers. Considering the demographic of Instagram users, it appears that young adults are more prone to media image consumption consequently putting them at risk of developing negative body image attitude. We need empirical studies that investigate the relationship between social media and its possible effects on its most active users including the male and female demographic.

3.1 Research Objective

The proposed research will investigate the relationship between social media and body image and fatphobia in Catalan undergraduate students. The study will focus on Instagram as the mediating platform mainly because Instagram is a solely image-based application making it a reliable source for data analysis. Body image describes how one evaluates one's own body whereas fatphobia is an attitude exposing a clear dislike towards fatness (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2012; Robinson et al., 1993). The population of this study will focus on are male and female Catalan undergraduate students.

The main idea is examine if and to what extent do images of idealized bodies perpetrated on Instagram affect body image and level of fatphobia in Catalan undergraduate students.

Experimental research will be the method used to explore possible relationships and results of this mediation. Surveys, which will include 3 previously established media use, body image and fatphobia scales, will be administered to an estimate of (n=200) undergraduate students.

3.2 General Objective

As mentioned earlier 91% report on to certain level of body dissatisfaction(Robertson, 2015). A finding suggested that 80.7% of men talk about their body with a sense of anxiety where 38% of men have been reported to sacrifice a year of their life in exchange for a perfect body (Denis Campbell, 2012).

Taking into consideration the probable harm of such mediation such as excessive body monitoring, dieting and exercising (Ferguson et al., 2011) , it becomes evident that modern studies should investigate the effects of new age media as a factor influencing this social problem.

The general objective of the research is to analyze the influence of social media in specific Instagram consumption to body image and fat phobia in Catalan undergraduates.

- **Specific Objective 1**

To identify the possible different levels of body image and fatphobia in highly active social media users and non-users.

- **Specific Objective 2**

To identify possible differences in levels of body and fatphobia among male and female adolescent males and females.

- **Specific Objective 3**

To be able to draw conclusions that will further assist in future cross-cultural comparisons between the Catalan demographic and other regions

3.3 Hypothesis

It has been demonstrated that traditional media consumption is related to negative body views (Renee Engeln–Maddox, 2005). Perloff (2004) suggests that this effect will extend to social media use and consumption (Williams and Ricciardelli, 2014). Based on that we deliver 4 hypotheses:

- **Hypothesis 1a (H1a):** Young adult males who spend more time on social media present higher levels of body dissatisfaction than young adult males who don't spend as much time.
- **Hypothesis 1b (H1b):** Young adult males who spend more time on social media present higher levels of body dissatisfaction and fatphobia than young adult males who don't spend as much time.
- **Hypothesis 2a (H2a):** Young adult females who spend more time on social media present higher levels of body dissatisfaction than young adult females who don't spend as much time.
- **Hypothesis 2b (H2b):** Young adult females who spend more time on social media present higher levels of body dissatisfaction and fatphobia than young adult females who don't spend as much time.

4. Methodology

In this section, we will expand on the method and sequence of steps that are going to be taken in the research study. Participants and sample size, procedure and data collection have been thoroughly regarded as to achieve adequate results.

4.1 Participants

The population for the proposed study will be localized to (n=200) Catalan male and female undergraduate students. There are a few reasons behind this decision. Firstly, results obtained from the Catalan population will allow for cross-cultural comparison. There have been many previous studies relating social media to body image perception (Brown & Tiggemann, 2016; Fardouly et al., 2015; Lewallen & Behm-Morawitz, 2016), however, most of the attention has been directed towards the Anglo-Saxon population giving us a margin for exploration.

Existing body image and fatphobia research (Fardouly et al., 2015) has been primarily focused around females participants whereas this study cumulates both female and male input.

Furthermore, data collected from Male Catalan students concerning body image, fatphobia and social media use will prove to be contemporary material.

Secondly, according to Statistica, the group of 16-26 years of age is found to be most active on Instagram (Appleton, 2017). This finding possibly makes the age group most susceptible to media influence and exposure and that is why this study will focus on undergraduate students where the expected age ranges from 18-23.

Finally, data extracted from the participants will then allow us to explore various dimensions of the mediated relationship. Other than sex, we can explore different variables such as year of study (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior or Senior) and chosen Major or Department of Study for example Engineer, Communication, Journalism among others.

It could be plausible that Freshman Students for example spend more time on Social than Senior Students since therefore might have higher levels of distortions in Body Image and fatphobia.

Data might show that Journalism undergraduates for example might have lower or varying results than other study fields as they might be more aware of media rhetoric and influence.

The sample (n=200) will include 100 male participants and 100 female participants. The number of participants has been chosen to be 100 of each sex because most of previously established studies (Brown & Tiggemann, 2016; Fardouly et al., 2015; Lewallen & Behm-Morawitz, 2016) stick to a tentative sample of (n=100).

4.2 Procedure

4.2.1 Research Design

This is a 3-part study with participant in an experimental research design (See Table 1).

Preparation to be done prior to the procedure includes recruiting participants which will be done through the supervisor's contacts and through online spaces and flyers enlisting. The listing will require input and cooperation from Catalan undergraduate students in a Communication-related Research. A sample of (n= 200) will be chosen and contacted to proceed to the next step.

At Time 1, the participants will be given the survey questionnaire to fill in. The survey will include basic socio-demographic questions, Sociocultural Attitude towards Appearance Questionnaire-3 (SATAQ-3; Thompson et al., 2004), Body Image Disturbance Questionnaire (BIDQ; Cash et al., 2004) and Fat phobia scale (Bacon et al., 2001) (See Table 1.2).

At Time 2, the participants will be asked to spend between 10-15 minutes on their own personal Instagram Account with liberty to examine and scroll the social platform freely After the viewing completion (Time 3), the participants will then be asked to complete the survey again.

Table 1

Time 1 <i>Pre-Exposure</i>	Time 2 <i>Stimulus</i>	Time 3 <i>Post-Exposure</i>
Initial completion of Questionnaire (SATAQ-3, BIDQ, Fat phobia)	Introduce Stimulus Social Media Exposure (Instagram Usage)	Final completion of Questionnaire (MMIS, BIDQ, Fat phobia)

The of aim of this experimental procedure is to complete the table presented below. Data corresponding to the projected boxes will provide adequate information.

Table 1.2

Participants	Results (Time 1)		Results (Time 3)	
H1a Male Undergraduates who spend a lot of time on Social Media	Body Image	Fat Phobia	Body Image	Fat Phobia
	x	y	x+	y+
H1b Male Undergraduate who do not spend a lot of time on Social Media	Body Image	Fat Phobia	Body Image	Fat Phobia
	x	y	x	y
H2a Female Undergraduates who spend a lot of time on Social Media	Body Image	Fat Phobia	Body Image	Fat Phobia
	x	y	x+(+)	y+(+)
H2b Female Undergraduate who do not spend a lot of time on Social Media	Body Image	Fat Phobia	Body Image	Fat Phobia
	x	y	x	y

This will allow us to create possible links between social media as a stimuli will affect on body image and fatphobia. That is to say, it could be probable that participants that spend more time on social media in specific following accounts which exposes them to body ideals will have varied responses after spending 10-15 mins on Instagram whereas students who do not follow such accounts will have the same initials answers. It is possible that the results will show that

female participants who engage the most in Instagram use will be most significantly different given that Instagram is particularly popular among young women (Lenhard, 2009). Once all the data has been collected, statistical analysis will be used to measure the responses.

4.2.2 Pilot Study

A pilot study of the experimental research will be conducted with a sample of (n=10) participant where (n=5) will be male and (n=5) will be female undergraduates. This will be done in anticipation of any unseen errors and accounts-

4.3 Data Collection

Three scales have been chosen to complete the assessment survey. Those scales are Sociocultural Attitude towards Appearance Questionnaire-3 (Thompson et al., 2004) , Body Image Disturbance Questionnaire (BIDQ; Cash et al., 2004) and Fat phobia scale (Bacon et al., 2001). In addition to that ,we we would like to include three questions concerning Instagram usage proposed by a previous study (Fardouly et al.,2017).

a) **Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire-3 (SATAQ-3)**

The Sociocultural Attitude towards Appearance Questionnaire-3 (Thompson et al., 2004) was developed as a revision of the first two scales that were initially presented. The questionnaire aims to reveal appearance related pressures and influences. It questions media influence related to TV, magazines, and movies and internalization of athletic and sports figures by asking about level of agreeability where 1 is definitely disagree and 5 is definitely disagree. Since social media is a relatively new phenomenon, adequate scales that test its influence on body or appearance related concerns have not been properly established. It is possible that we adjust the scale as to better serve modern day criteria.

For example: Q.26) I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to change my appearance. 1 _____ 5

→ Q.26) I've felt pressure from social media to change my appearance. 1 _____ 5

b) Body Image Disturbance Questionnaire (BIDQ)

There are several Body Image-related Scales that have been constructed each with a specific function. The Body Image Disturbance Questionnaire designed by Thomas F. Cash (2004) fulfills the requirements of this research as it is suitable for both sexes and appropriate for late adolescents and young adults. It has also been tested on Caucasian and African American women. More importantly, the scale takes into consideration many facets of daily life where body image disturbance may be present.

“The BIDQ contains seven scaled items that pertain to appearance-related concerns, mental preoccupation with these concerns, associated experiences of emotional distress, resultant impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning, interference with social life or with school, job, or role functioning, and consequential behavioral avoidance”. (Cash, 2004).

It is precisely these qualifications that will us a comprehensive understanding of the state of body image in the participants.

c) Fat phobia scale

The original fat phobia scale was made up of a 50 item measure. After which, a shortened 14-item version was introduced and demonstrated excellent reliability when compared to the 50-item scale and is expected to prove suitable in many areas of research and clinical settings (Bacon et al., 2001). The scale is successful at testing anti-fat attitudes by using a likert scale to measure the level of agreeableness with fat-related stereotypes such as level of laziness, insecurity and attractiveness among others. The scoring of the comprehensive survey is made easy with likert scales measuring the level of agreeableness from a scale of 1-5.

d) Instagram Usage Questions (Fardouly et al., 2017)

1- “How often do you check Instagram (even if you are logged on all day)?”

(1=not at all, 2=every few days, 3=once a day, 4=every few hours, 5=every hour, 6=every 30 minutes, 7=every 10 minutes, 8=every 5 minutes)

2- “Overall, how long do you spend on Instagram on a typical day?”

(1=5minutes or less, 2=15 minutes, 3=30minutes, 4=1 hour, 5=2 hours, 6=3 hours, 7=4 hours, 8=5 hours, 9=6 hours, 10=7 hours, 11=8 hours, 12=9 hours, 13=10 hours or more).

3- How often do you view fitspiration images on Instagram?

(1=never, 5=every time I use Instagram; range=1–5).

5. Limitations

There are notable strengths and likewise weakness of the proposed research. One limitation that we are able to identify is that we can not uncover or be certain of the type of imagery and material the participants are exposing themselves to during Time2 of the research procedure when they will be requested to spend 10-15 minutes on their personal Instagram. In that case, exposure to idealized body images might and might not be possible.

Another limitation could be that participants might engage in online social comparison among peers and friends which is believed to increase body image dissatisfaction therefore future research must duly examined and explore the different activities on social media. Finally, there isn't any financial support to fund or back the research. The Body Image Disturbance Questionnaire (BIDQ; Cash et al., 2004) for example is not free of charge with a period of use that is limited to two years.

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7. Project Timeline

The duration required for the completion of the proposed research study is 3 full years. The timeline of the necessary tasks is as follows:

Project Timeline									
Task	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3		
	Sep- Dec 2017	Jan - July, 2018	Aug- Dec, 2018	Jan - March, 2019	April -Sep, 2019	Oct - Dec, 2019	Jan - Aug, 2020	Aug - Sep, 2020	Oct 2020
Full Proposal Key concepts	■								
Reading Period Literature review + Previous Studies	■								
Methodology Sample/ Scales			■						
Survey Finalize questionnaire + Translation				■					
Data Gathering Sample + Data Collection					■				
Data Analysis Examination and Statistical Analysis						■			
Conclusion Composition							■		
Introduction Preparation, Edit of material							■		
Revision Finalization/Submit								■	

7.1 Prospective Chapters

Chapter 1:

September/October 2017

- Introduction to Body Image and Fatphobia
- Defining underlying psychological theories regarding body perception and self evaluation.

Chapter 2:

October/November 2017

- Social Media and the Millennial generation
- Studying different aspects of social media and its effects on cultural exchange

Chapter 3: Related Research

November/December 2017

- Examine previous researches and analysis

Chapter 4: Statistical Analysis of Social Media on Body Image and Fatphobia

January 2019-December 2019

- English and Catalan Survey
- Statistical analysis of existing material

Chapter 5: Results and Discussion

January-October 2020

- Incorporating and comparing results of the quantitative with previous literature work

Chapter 6: Limitations

8. Appendix A

Scales

1.Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire-3(SATAQ-3;Thompson et al., 2004)

Please read each of the following items carefully and indicate the number that best reflects your agreement with the statement.

Definitely Disagree = 1

Mostly Disagree = 2

Neither Agree Nor Disagree = 3

Mostly Agree = 4

Definitely Agree = 5

1. TV programs are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."

2. I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to lose weight.

3. I do not care if my body looks like the body of people who are on TV.

4. I compare my body to the bodies of people who are on TV.

5. TV commercials are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive." _____
6. I do not feel pressure from TV or magazines to look pretty.

7. I would like my body to look like the models who appear in magazines.

8. I compare my appearance to the appearance of TV and movie stars.

9. Music videos on TV are not an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive." _____
10. I've felt pressure from TV and magazines to be thin.

11. I would like my body to look like the people who are in movies.

12. I do not compare my body to the bodies of people who appear in magazines.

13. Magazine articles are not an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive." _____
14. I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to have a perfect body.

15. I wish I looked like the models in music videos.

16. I compare my appearance to the appearance of people in magazines.

17. Magazine advertisements are an important source of information about fashion and

"being attractive." _____

18. I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to diet.

19. I do not wish to look as athletic as the people in magazines.

20. I compare my body to that of people in "good shape."

21. Pictures in magazines are an important source of information about fashion and "being

attractive." _____

22. I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to exercise.

23. I wish I looked as athletic as sports stars.

24. I compare my body to that of people who are athletic.

25. Movies are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."

26. I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to change my appearance.

27. I do not try to look like the people on TV.

28. Movie stars are not an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive." _____

29. Famous people are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive." _____

30. I try to look like sports athletes.

2. Fatphobia Scale Revisited (Bacon et al., 2001)

a. Today's date _____ b. Height _____ c. Weight _____ d. Age _____ e. Sex _____
 f. Education level _____ g. Occupation _____ h. Race/ethnicity _____

Directions: Listed below are 14 pairs of adjectives sometimes used to describe **obese** or **fat** people. For each adjective pair, please place an **X** on the line closest to the adjective that you feel best describes your feelings and beliefs.

1.	lazy	_____5_____	_____4_____	_____3_____	_____2_____	_____1_____	industrious
2.	no will power	_____5_____	_____4_____	_____3_____	_____2_____	_____1_____	has will power
3.	attractive	_____1_____	_____2_____	_____3_____	_____4_____	_____5_____	unattractive
4.	good self-control	_____1_____	_____2_____	_____3_____	_____4_____	_____5_____	poor self-control
5.	fast	_____1_____	_____2_____	_____3_____	_____4_____	_____5_____	slow
6.	having endurance	_____1_____	_____2_____	_____3_____	_____4_____	_____5_____	having no endurance
7.	active	_____1_____	_____2_____	_____3_____	_____4_____	_____5_____	inactive
8.	weak	_____5_____	_____4_____	_____3_____	_____2_____	_____1_____	strong
9.	self-indulgent	_____5_____	_____4_____	_____3_____	_____2_____	_____1_____	self-sacrificing
10.	dislikes food	_____1_____	_____2_____	_____3_____	_____4_____	_____5_____	likes food
11.	shapeless	_____5_____	_____4_____	_____3_____	_____2_____	_____1_____	shapely
12.	undereats	_____1_____	_____2_____	_____3_____	_____4_____	_____5_____	overeats
13.	insecure	_____5_____	_____4_____	_____3_____	_____2_____	_____1_____	secure
14.	low self-esteem	_____5_____	_____4_____	_____3_____	_____2_____	_____1_____	high self-esteem

Scoring Instructions:
 Step 1: For items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, and 12, score as follows:
 1 2 3 4 5
 Step 2: For items 1, 2, 8, 9, 11, 13, and 14, score as follows:
 5 4 3 2 1
 Step 3: Add up the score for each item to get the total score. Then divide by 14 (or the number of items answered, whichever is less). The range of scores is 1 – 5.
 High scores = more 'fat phobia'. Low scores = less 'fat phobia'.
 Please contact BE Robinson for permission to use the scale.

2. Instagram Models

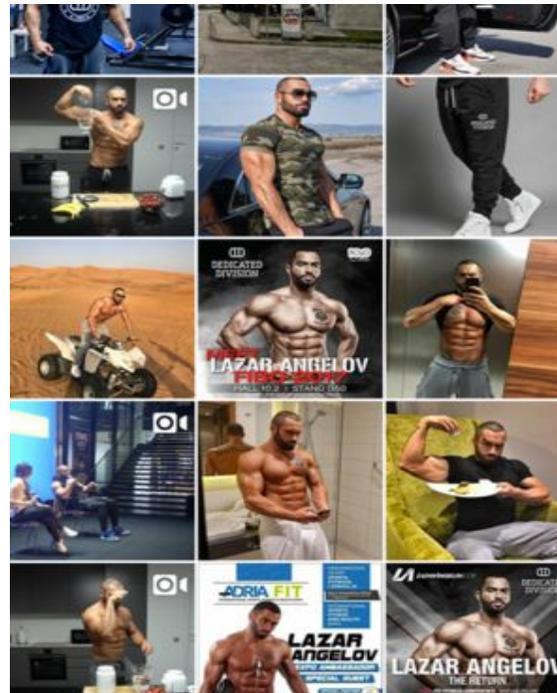
2.1- Spanish Instagram Model

Sura Abellan - 264 000 followers



2.2 Male Fitness Model

Lazar Angelo - 5 million followers



3. Fatphobia in Media

3.1 GAP campaign (2017)



3.2 Red Shoes and 7 Dwarfs (2017)

“What if Snow White was no longer beautiful and the 7 Dwarfs not so short?”

